



## Thomas Lynn Eichler

June 3, 1943 - March 12, 2020

Thomas Lynn Eichler, of Camden and Lewes, DE, 76, left us suddenly on March 12, 2020.

He was an extraordinary man in many ordinary ways and his strong presence will be sorely missed.

For all who knew and loved him, Tom was renowned for his love of a good story, his quick wit, and his strong handshake. He had a genuine interest in people and never met a stranger. Tom loved golfing at Wild Quail Country Club, catamaran sailing, fishing, airplanes of all kinds - especially his solo flight in 1970, kite flying, and most importantly physical fitness. Tom set a high bar for himself after a heart attack at age 51. His incredible fitness motivated many and allowed us to enjoy his presence much longer than his caring doctors expected. They marveled at his determination to challenge his compromised heart.

The son of the late Harold and Pauline Eichler, Tom was born on June 3, 1943 in Hillsdale, Michigan. He grew up in Reading, Michigan and graduated from Reading High School in 1961. The memories created became part of his large repertoire of stories to share and each special relationship was sustained long term and valued by him to this day. Tom remained a lifelong fan of the Reading Rangers and a true blue U of M football fan.

Tom's next journey took him to Disney Studios in California. Upon his return to Michigan, he attended Hillsdale College and operated the Eichler Paint Store in Jonesville. He entered into his 40 year career of Banking and Finance starting with the Citizens National Bank in West Unity, Ohio. He later became a licensed real estate agent in both Ohio and Delaware.

Tom moved to Delaware in the mid 1990's and later met his wife, Katrina (VanderVeen). Unbeknownst to either of them, she grew up within 20 miles of Tom. They were destined to meet - and did - while exercising in Camden, DE. It became Tom's favorite story to tell.

Tom was predeceased by his brother, Robert Eichler, his brothers-in law, Warren Price and Patrick VanderVeen, and his twin grandsons, Matthew and Patrick Propst. He leaves behind his treasured wife, Katrina Eichler. He will be missed dearly by his sister Colleen Forrester (Bill) of Royal Oak, MI, his mother-in-law (and his fierce jeopardy competitor) Jane VanderVeen, of Lewes, DE, his sister-in-law, Linda Price of Wellington, FL, and his sister-in-law, Laurie VanderVeen, of Havertown, PA. Holding tight to his memory are daughters Lynnette Rittenhouse (Ken) of Hillsborough, NJ, Carrie Adkins (Paul) of Camden, DE, Erica Eichler of Mason, OH, and his step-children Gavin Furlong (Dawnyel) of Lewes, DE, and Logan Furlong (Steve) of Wilmington, DE. Tom loved his 13 grandchildren, his newly born great-grandson, and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

A celebration of Tom's life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please simply pass on Tom's smile and laugh to someone who needs it and consider a donation in his name to the American Heart Association.

Please sign Tom's online guestbook located on this site.

# Comments

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“ Trina and family, we just heard about Tom. So very sorry for your loss. We enjoyed talking with him at the gym in Camden. You, Gavin and Logan are in our prayers. Fondly, Dana and Sheila

**Sheila Dougherty** - July 13 at 05:22 PM

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“ Dear Trina,  
All of us at Catholic Charities are saddened to hear of Tom's passing. Our sincere condolences to you and your family. Tom was a wonderful man and he is surely missed. We think of you often and keep you in our prayers.  
Richelle Vible

**rvible** - April 05 at 07:35 AM

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“ Tom was a true gift that I will miss as will anyone that knew him. He was a true renaissance man. His love of life, his energy, his interest in all things and the joy he shared with others was boundless. Golf, basketball, exercise, fishing, anything boating or airplanes, food, cars - he was a motivator and lover of activity. He turned the common into the extraordinary and made things fun, Even a simple handshake he would turn into a good nature contest. Laughing and giggling as he playfully showed off his hand crushing strength.  
I always enjoyed his company and time - on the phone or in person.

Trina - I am very sad for your loss - but he has left a large hole in many lives and one that no one could ever fill. You have my prayers and support now and whenever needed.

I will miss him and his "supergrip" handshakes.

**Ken R** - April 04 at 09:31 AM

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“ Remember Tom well. Our parents, Harold and Pauline, and my parents, Wilmer and Helen Stone, were dear friends and lived within a block of each other in Reading. My condolences at this time!

**Carol Gabriele** - April 01 at 04:49 PM

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“ Tom graduate with my bother jerry Briner they had some good memories of days growing up in Reading playing ball together for the Reading Rangers they can now tell stories in heaven God speed

martha briner bowers - April 01 at 04:31 PM

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“ Oh my, SO MANY memories of one of my closest, best buddy, friend growing up in good-ol Reading, MI. I mean we ran the roads of Hillsdale county and mam oh man, we had fun. One special memory is visiting Tom when he was working for Walt Disney we went out to visit him. He gave us a behind the scenes tour of Disney studios, let me take his vehicle down through Hollywood to pic up a girl and go on a date / I mean, let this small town boy drive around Hollywood/now that's 100% pure buddy. Loved him to pieces. Couldn't have had a better buddy growing up. I'm just saddened to pieces.

Jerry Redding - April 01 at 01:03 PM

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“ Tom was my banking buddy. He was such a joy with a twinkle in his eyes.. I think of him and have to smile. Trina, words cannot express how sorry I am for your loss. Sending my love to you.

Carole Pearce - April 01 at 09:11 AM

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“ I will always remember our lunches at McDonalds, the flowers planted in the shape of a heart in the backyard, the look on his face while sailing up to a Bahamian island on a catamaran, laughing hysterically together while playing ping-pong, and the one thing I learned from my only lesson on the golf-course - “Don't stomp on the green”.

<3 Sarah

Sarah - March 31 at 06:31 PM

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“ Trina, Carrie and family,  
I am so sorry for your loss! Keeping you in our thoughts and prayers!  
Debbie and Rich Brackett

debbie brackett - March 31 at 04:25 PM

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“ Trina, my heart goes out to you and your family. Know that you are in my prayers. Take comfort from the love you shared, because the love never dies. Paula Savini

Paula Savini - March 31 at 04:21 PM

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“ My condolences to Trina and the entire family. Tom will be missed.



Linda - March 31 at 01:57 PM

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“ Trina and Family,  
We are so sorry for your loss. Thinking of you and your family at this difficult time.  
Michelle & Jim Statham



michelle - March 31 at 01:41 PM

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“ Tom and I are 10 years apart.  
As I grew to an age that I could visit my grandparents, and my Uncle Tom, I enjoyed some “hang- time” with him. If he found those times as interrupting, he never let me see.  
On one occasion he ride me on the handlebars of his bike to the school playground. There he pushed me on swings and the merry go round. Off to the right of that equipment was the slide. As we went up and down the metal slide we disturbed a hornets nest.  
We began getting stung right away. We ran for his bike. Tom took off his shirt as we ran. He swung it in circles around us. He hoisted me onto the handlebars and jumped on behind me. His bare back was being pelted by those wasps. I remember him crying out in his own pain but I also vividly remember his sheltering of me. One hand kept swinging that shirt as he pedaled hard for home.

Grandma gave care for us both of course. But I remember, and we'd remembered, the trial that was. It was childhood times but it was a foreshadowing of the quality and character of my Uncle. The man he grew to be.

I know we shouldn't play favorites in families, but my Uncle Tom was the best. Still is!!

**Becky Stacy** - March 31 at 12:51 PM